

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WESTERN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE does not review all books sent to it by the publishers. A list of new books received is carried in the Advertising Section.

CURRENT NEUROLOGY—Volume 1—Edited by H. Richard Tyler, MD, Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School; Head, Section of Neurology, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston; and David M. Dawson, MD, Associate Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School; Physician, Section of Neurology, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Houghton Mifflin Professional Publishers, Medical Division, Two Park St., Boston (02107), 1978. 499 pages, \$29.00 (US), \$37.50 (elsewhere).

This volume is primarily directed toward busy neurologists as a mechanism to help these physicians "remain up-to-date." The editors have proposed a yearly review similar to this volume covering the field of neurology in a two-to-three year cycle.

As with most multiauthored books, there is great variation in the quality of individual chapters. For example, the chapter on myasthenia gravis is well organized, highly informative and includes recent advances in the pathophysiology of the disorder. On the other hand, the chapter on multiple sclerosis, while containing the most recent etiologic theories, is poorly organized and rambling.

Some of the information presented is quite new and there has not been sufficient time to confirm the observations or to fully appreciate the overall significance of the information to the discipline of neurology. The chapter on Friedreich's and other hereditary ataxias demonstrates this problem clearly. The author attempts to reclassify the various dominantly inherited ataxias into a single disorder which he calls "dominant hereditary ataxia." This author utilized reports of HLA linkage in two families to support his proposed unifying classification. More recent reports have now shown multiple forms of dominantly inherited ataxia as there are some families in which there is HLA linkage (chromosome 6) and yet other families where no HLA system linkage was present. This more recent evidence supports the older classification systems that there are indeed different genetic forms of the dominantly inherited ataxias.

While this volume is directed towards neurologists there are certain chapters which would be of great value to generalists. This reviewer can highly recommend the following chapters: Parkinson's Disease, Transient Ischemic Attacks, and Hypertension and the Central Nervous System.

At the end of many of the chapters the editors present some new information of their own. The editors could have utilized their vast collective experience more effectively by discussing and clarifying certain aspects of the preceding chapter than by presenting these new topics.

The volume is handsomely presented but too expensive for a yearly review.

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CURRENT NEUROLOGY—Volume 2—Houghton Mifflin Professional Publishers, Medical Division, Two Park St., Boston (02107), 1979. 531 pages, \$34.00 (US), \$42.50 (elsewhere).

Current Neurology—Volume 2 follows the initial publication of Volume 1 by approximately a year, as promised by the editors in the preface to Volume 1. The editors are to be congratulated; this was obviously a monumental task considering the number of contributors with which they had to deal.

The current volume contains a review of 16 new topics in addition to 10 shorter updates of topics covered in Volume 1. As a whole, the new reviews are reasonably well presented and cover a wide spectrum of topics from

specific degenerative and neoplastic disorders to a proposed research project to clarify the possible role of mitochondrial dysfunction in a number of seemingly unrelated diseases. The chapters entitled "Valproate and the Management of Seizures" and "Evoked Potentials" are both excellent. The chapter entitled "Neuropsychologic Aspects of Aphasia" reflects the state of the art concerning the lack of understanding responsible for normal or disordered language.

The update chapters are relatively short and most of the references are quite recent. The amount of useful new information, however, is not commensurate with the amount of space devoted to these chapters. The editors' choice of this format is unfortunate because it requires the purchase of the entire series and constant referral to earlier volumes for these updates to be meaningful.

While *Current Neurology—Volume 2* is directed at neurologists particularly, internists and generalists will find the review chapters on "Intracerebral Hemorrhage," "Viral Diseases of the Nervous System," "The Heart and Neurologic Disorders" and "Metabolic Encephalopathy" particularly useful.

This volume is handsomely published, but too expensive for a yearly review.

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THE MANAGEMENT OF MEDICAL PRACTICE—John McCormick, MHA, Administrative Services, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota; Ronald Lee Rushing, CPA, MBA, Director of Fiscal Services, Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, Houston; and W. Grayburn Davis, MD, Executive Vice President, American Group Practice Association, Alexandria, Virginia. Ballinger Publishing Company, 17 Dunster Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA (02138), 1978. 388 pages, \$20.00.

One of the most difficult problems every doctor in private practice has to face is how to manage a practice. Everyone comes out of training well enough prepared to deliver health care, but few of us acquire much knowledge along the way about the economic mechanisms involved. This book is an admirable, and I believe successful, attempt to present a great deal of information that most of us are forced to learn the hard way. Any doctor planning to go into the practice of medicine, whether it be solo, partnership, group, or even working for a governmental entity, would profit from reading this book. It goes into the day-by-day details of how to run an office, all the pertinent legal and accounting ramifications, how to set up the practice in the first place, how to choose the proper locale, and even how to figure out what might be the best sort of practice for you. The credentials of the writers seem good indeed; this is perhaps best substantiated by the fact that they present their views in clear, concise language, and simply enough (even with rather complex tax and accounting matters) that the average doctor should be well able to understand. Not only should doctors just entering private practice read this book, I believe that those of us still actively engaged in private practice can learn a great deal from reading it.

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